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WEEKEND TV: Here's a Peek, Anyway, Inside the CIA (But Look Quickly!)

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"We did not kid ourselves and we urge you not to kid yourselves. Don't be misled, this is only brief tour."

Those words, spoken by Dan Rather as the camera focuses on the CIA sign on Highway 123 (Chain Bridge Road in Northern Virginia) and turns down the road to the United States' murkiest department, are a summation as well as a beginning. For reasons that soon become obvious, the Central Intelligence Agency — with President Carter's blessing and participation — has "allowed" "60 Minutes" limited access to the grounds and buildings for a film report titled "Behind Closed Doors."

Aired at 7 p.m. Sunday on WTOP-9, "Sixty Minutes" will also feature a segment on Walter Cronkite, CBS anchorman and weekend sailor, covering preparations for the 1977 America's Cup sailing races.

CONSIDERING THE nasty name it has earned since its inception in 1947, it was a brilliant stroke of public relations for the CIA to open its doors to "60 Minutes." Brilliant *and* safe — the agency established the ground rules and called all the shots. Despite Rather's cautionary statements — and there are several — the CIA comes out smelling like a rose.

But if for no other reason than that it is the first time a non-employe has laid eyes on the inside of the CIA complex in McLean, the report is important. It is not earthshaking, but it does have a certain uneasy, if aseptic fascination. The segment's production excellence is "60 Minutes" at its classiest, and Rather elicits about the best interview you could expect from a bureaucrat, especially one like CIA director Stansfield Turner — in the words on the nameplate on his door, "Super Spook."

You aren't going to get any secret insights into how the CIA works — it's largely done with computers, as you might expect. But you will glean bits and pieces of carefully sifted information: in the Signals Analysis Division, for example, computers are intercepting Soviet radar signals to their military, their intelligence and their diplomats. Rather's cryptic dialogue with a man whose back is turned to the camera gives no indication of just how much information the CIA gets this way. But we do have the strong suspicion that in a quiet suburb of Moscow, another man is facing a computer, watching us.

ABOUT THE CLOSEST the show comes to illustrating CIA vulnerability is when it is revealed that one of the phones in the home of an overseas officer was bugged. A CIA employe assures us, "We have removed the instrument," and an investigation is underway to "see if we can identify the country

The interview with Turner has all the appearances of a campaign film. Turner, as Rather fills us in, is 56, an Annapolis classmate of President Carter, and a man who "insists" on keeping his Naval rank (admiral). His staff consists of six Navy officers who "some CIA oldtimers" refer to as his "Navy Mafia," isolating him from "the regulars."

Rather reviews speculation that Turner wants to reorganize the country's entire intelligence operation; it would culminate "with one person having Cabinet rank and answerable directly to the President and Congress, responsible for all spying worldwide, man and satellite. Suspicions run high that Turner wants to be that person." Unfortunately, Rather concludes helplessly, Turner "flatly refused to discuss the matter publicly."

Nor is the admiral about to admit that he and Secretary of Defense Harold Brown are "at each other's throat" ("nothing could be further from the truth").

MORE COMES THROUGH BY watching than by listening — and that, perhaps, is one of television's greatest strengths. But the question is, whose truth are we getting? Through a fast series of film excerpts, Turner is portrayed visually as tough, strong, decisive, hard-working, privy to the President; rough-housing with his dog in his home (the lady who sits placidly watching, we assume, is Mrs. Turner), hitting a mean tennis ball, taking a mean bite out of a hamburger as he sits at his desk, walking down the street surrounded by aides and not missing a step as he keeps his eye on a document while walking. He is on his way to the Oval Office, we presume, for next we see a smiling President Carter settling in for a meeting with him; they see each other, we are told, once a week.

"I don't know of anything that's been a more pleasant surprise than to learn about the competence and the professionalism of the CIA," Carter says, as if cued. "And one of the great things about it is when I need information in a hurry, it's always there." Turner, it is implied, is always there too.

Getting that information can be difficult, Turner says, turning on the honest charm. "My job in collecting intelligence is to do the indecent things as decently as possible," he says. We are left with the feeling that he'll do what he feels needs to be done — just like his predecessors.